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REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action of March 18, 2008. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims 19-35 are requested.

The Office Action

Claims 18 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 18, 19, 22, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Obara (US 6,176,620) or Jeffroy (FR 1,464,889).

Claims 23-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Obara.

Claim 34 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Obara in view of Alexander (US 3,445,146).

Claim 36 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Obara.

Claim 27 does not stand rejected on art and is understood to contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 20, 21, and 28-33 are drawn to non-elected species.

The Present Amendment

Claim 27 has been placed in independent form including all of the subject matter of claim 1, revised to address the 35 U.S.C. § 112 issue raised by the Examiner. Because claim 27 does not stand rejected on prior art, it is submitted that this amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

Parent claim 18 has been cancelled, along with independent claim 36. The remaining dependent claims have been amended to depend directly or indirectly from allowable claim 27.

Accordingly, it is submitted that all claims are now in condition for allowance.

The Present Amendment Should Be Entered

The present amendment places claim 27 in independent form, including the subject matter of its parent claim and resolving the 35 U.S.C. § 112 issue with

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regard to its parent claim. Because claim 27 is merely placed in independent form, the amendment to claim 27 raises no issues which would require further search or consideration.

Because the remaining dependent claims have been amended to depend from an allowable claim, it is submitted that no further search or consideration is required concerning claims 19-26 and 28-35.

Because the non-elected species now depend from an allowable claim, it is submitted that all species claims should be allowed as well.

35 U.S.C. § 112

In incorporating the subject matter of parent claim 18 into claim 27, the phrase "relatively narrow" to which the Examiner objected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 has been deleted. Claims 23 and 24 give examples of gaps which are deemed to be "relatively narrow".

In claim 22, line 2 has been amended to change "lid" to "cover" as suggested by the Examiner.

Claim 34 is supported by the last line of page 6 of the specification, which gives examples of materials, e.g., MoS₂ and Teflon, that increase friction and reduce the chances of seizing. Because the application gives examples of materials with these properties, it is submitted that claim 34 meets the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

CONCLUSION

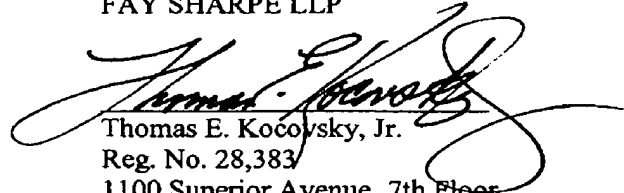
For the reasons set forth above, it is submitted that claims 19-35 distinguish patentably and unobviously over the references of record and comply with the other statutory requirements. An early allowance of claims 19-35 is requested.

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In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he is requested to telephone Thomas Kocovsky at (216) 861-5582.

Respectfully submitted,

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